

## The Mirror of the Soul

Richard Rufus of Cornwall

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[Question 1: In what manner is the soul all things?]

“In some manner the soul is all things” [*On the Soul*, 3.8.431b20-21].

This is a concise saying of the Philosopher. It is not, however, sufficiently clear to everybody. Man of God, what do you ask of me regarding this subject? For you know that I am ignorant of science, and this subject may require deep investigation. So you ask that I specify for you what I mean by ‘in some manner’ — for in *what* manner is the soul all things? You want me to specify the manner for you, either in one concise statement, or by explaining individual manners for individual entities.

So, it seems that the Philosopher proves this proposition inductively, thus: ‘in some manner sense is [all] sensibles, in some manner the intellect is [all] intelligibles’, therefore, etc.<sup>1</sup> [*On the Soul*, 3.8.431b22-23].

[Objections]

Here you immediately make two objections:

[1] The first [objection] is that the soul has three parts — the vegetative, the sensitive, [and] the intellective — [but] in this proof, the Philosopher does not claim that the vegetative part is the same as any entities. Therefore it seems that he should not say that the soul taken absolutely is in some manner all things, but only with respect to some of its parts.

Just so, it seems that we ought to say that only the intellective [soul] is in some manner all things. For all things whatsoever are intelligible, [both] universals and singulars. All natures are in themselves truly and absolutely intelligible, though the first and remotest principles are not comprehensible to us. For there is a flaw in us, just as in the eyes of the bat, which do not see the sun [*Metaphysics*, 2.1.993b9-12].

[2] Besides which, in what manner is our sense sensibles and our intellect intelligibles? These assumptions are, in fact, just as obscure as the conclusion.<sup>2</sup> For the sensitive [soul] is a living thing, and a substance; sensibles, however, are non-living (dead) things: they are accidents, qualities of the third kind [*Categories*, 8.9a29]. In what way, therefore, are the former the same as the latter? To be sure, it is now evident that they cannot be the same, except merely in being and entity. For they share no genus whatsoever. Therefore

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<sup>1</sup>I.e., therefore in some manner the soul is all things.

<sup>2</sup>That is, these claims are just as obscure as the overall claim that the soul is in some manner all things.

it seems that it is useless to say ‘in some manner sense is sensibles’. For if someone were to say, ‘man is in some way an ass’, he would be speaking more properly and correctly, for [man and ass] share a genus — indeed, [multiple] genera.

You inquire in like manner about the intellective part [of the soul] and intelligibles, since substances and accidents, living things and non-living things are [all] intelligible things. But the intellect, however, [can be] only a substance and a living thing.

[First response of the Philosopher to the second objection:

The sense is the same kind of thing potentially as the sensible is actually]

Man of God, when I ask in what manner the sense is the sensible itself, you will draw upon the same author in reply to me. You will answer with the Philosopher, in this manner — that is to say, ‘the sense is the same kind of thing potentially as the sensible is actually’ [*On the Soul*, 2.5.418a3] — and you will apply that dictum to the individual senses and [their respective] sensibles. Thus sight is potentially the same kind of thing as a visible thing is actually, and similarly for the other [senses].

But against this, Man of God, I object: if ‘the sense is potentially the same kind of thing, etc.’, then sometimes sense will *actually* be the same kind of thing, etc.<sup>3</sup>

To [illustrate] the same [point]: to sense is, in some manner, to be acted upon and to be altered, since sense is in the genus of passive faculties, according to the same Philosopher [*On the Soul*, 2.5.416b32-35]. Agents and patients are, moreover, dissimilar at the outset; but in the end, when acted upon, they are similar. Therefore the sensitive [faculty] is passive, because to sense is to be acted upon in a certain way. In the end, when it has been acted upon, [the sensitive faculty] will be similar to the active, namely the sensible. Then at that point it will be the case that ‘the sense is the same kind of thing actually as the sensible also is actually’.

But now I ask what it means to say that sometimes ‘the sensitive [soul] will actually be the same type of thing as the sensible itself’. What do you mean when you say ‘the same type’? I ask: if I actually see a color, is the visual faculty of my eye actually that color? Or do you not hold that color is like this? I ask: will the visual faculty actually become qualitatively similar to the color? This explanation seems worthless, since just as we said above, they seem not to be the same, except in being and entity.

I confess, Man of God, that these objections are tentative. But resolving them correctly is necessary to our project. Therefore through the grace of

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<sup>3</sup>That is, if a sense (like sight) is potentially the same kind of thing as a visible object, then sometimes that potential will be fulfilled (so to speak), and it will *actually* be the same kind of thing.

God and through your prayers, Man of God, I hope to return to these at some point.<sup>4</sup>

[Second response of the Philosopher to the second objection:  
Man as a lesser world]

But what we read appears inadequate to the problem we proposed for ourselves, Man of God: ‘in some manner man is every created thing, and man is the world’, a smaller [world] namely [*Physics*, 8.2.252b25-26].<sup>5</sup> In this way, man shares [something] with all created things: “existence with stones, living with plants, sensing with beasts, thinking with angels,” and finally man shares [something] with God.

If this were the correct way to expound the aforesaid saying, not only would man be the world and all created things in some manner, but one part of man on its own would be, namely the soul. And the soul would be a smaller world. And according to what was said earlier, man is more truly an ass in some manner than the soul is stones in some manner, because the soul shares only being with stones, according to the preceding exposition of the Gospel. Man and ass, however, share in being, living, sensing, genus, and most general genus. Therefore many forms and natures are univocally [predicated] of them.

[Third response of the Philosopher to the second objection:  
Sense is a certain midpoint of sensibles]

Perhaps you will respond to me in a different way. How, according to the Philosopher himself, is sense sensibles? ‘Sense is a certain midpoint of sensibles,’ [*On the Soul*, 2.11.424a4] [you will say]. That is why the sense is corrupted by intense external contrary sensibles [*On the Soul*, 3.4.429b1]. So you will say to me that sense is in some manner sensibles, etc., as a midpoint is in some manner its extremes, since it is composed from them.

But, Man of God, on the contrary I ask: what is the use of saying, ‘sense is the midpoint of sensibles’ [*On the Soul*, 424a4]? For this is troublesome in itself. For if we understand that sight is a midpoint of colors in this way, namely an intermediate color composed from the extreme colors, then sight itself would not receive intermediate colors.<sup>6</sup> For sight would contain them in itself, and nothing that actually has something receives that same thing as such, since every receiving [entity] lacks what it receives as such, as these philosophers say.

Man of God, note at the outset that the name ‘sense’ is taken in many ways by the Philosopher: sometimes [it means] (1) the soul’s sensitive power,

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<sup>4</sup>See Question 3 below.

<sup>5</sup>Cf. Rufus, *In Physicam Arist.* 8.1.9, ed. R. Wood (Oxford, 2003), pp. 223-224.

<sup>6</sup>Medievals believed that all colors were composed of black and white in varying proportions; this background assumption helps explain the force of Rufus’ argument in this paragraph.

sometimes (2) the habit of sensing, sometimes (3) the operation of sensing, and also sometimes (4) the organ itself — the member, namely, composed of body and the soul's living and sensing power. This last [meaning] is less proper, but it is sometimes found in the Philosopher's [works], perhaps because this sensing operation pertains only to the animate composite; namely, it is the operation of the organ, and the sensitive power in itself does not drive its operation in the way the intellect drives its<sup>7</sup> operation. For the sensitive soul neither lives nor apprehends, except as it gives life and sense to the body.

Thus, Man of God, when you hear that 'sense is a midpoint of sensibles', it seems that 'sense' should be taken according to the fourth meaning, and that this sensing must refer most compellingly to the organ. And yet this differs for different senses. For in the senses of touch and taste the organ of the sense itself is a composite and a mixture of contraries, extreme tangibles; and thus the sense — namely the organ — is a midpoint of sensibles. Thus the sense of touch does not apprehend tangibles correctly and well unless they are extreme. That is to say, it does not discriminate well [among] moderate [differences] between hot and cold [or] wet and dry; it best discriminates [between] intense cases of extreme contraries. This is not, however, the case for the other senses — sight and the others — namely, that the organ of sight is composed and mixed of contrary colors, white and black, etc.

And therefore we should note that this phrase, 'a midpoint of sensibles', is used in many [ways]. For in one manner it indicates a medium generated from a mixture of contrary sensibles, as in touch and taste. In another manner the midpoint of sensibles is said to be a single shared nature, namely a sensible common to all sensibles, extreme or intermediate. And that, too, can be [the case] in two manners.

First, as the genus can be called a nature intermediate between its contrary differentia, and not because it is a mixture composed from different contraries. For it is more simple than each of two differentiae,<sup>8</sup> and yet is properly called their intermediate. Since contrariety is the greatest distance [*Metaphysics*, 10.4.1055a9-10], and the extremes of this distance are the contrary differentiae, the genus itself is the intermediate between these extremes. The genus [of animals] is extended between these endpoints as much as possible while preserving its quiddity<sup>9</sup> in nature, name, and definition. And, therefore, if we were to imagine its being more extended at either extreme, the [further] extension would not be in the genus of animal.

In another way quite similar to the one described immediately above, [the midpoint is] some nature that is not a genus of sensibles, but [something] that shares [itself] and is some original root material cause. And when [this nature]

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<sup>7</sup>I.e., the intellect's.

<sup>8</sup>Animal is the genus, and it is more simple than man (rational animal); rational is the *differentia*.

<sup>9</sup>Here "quiddity" translates the phrase "*id ipsum quod est*."

is differently received in different matters, it generates diverse sensibles (as light is [related] to all sensibles), [but is] not, perhaps, properly their genus.

[In what way sight is a midpoint of visibles]

Let us say, therefore, regarding the sense of sight, how sight, or the organ of sight, is a midpoint of visibles, namely colors. Perhaps [it is] in this way, as a midpoint is said to be this common thing — namely, a nature shared by all colors in the composition of the organ of sight, namely the pupil. For example: light mixed with the transparent, both of which play a major role in the composition of the eye. And these two [light and the transparent] are the original primitive causes, generating all colors. For more or less of light and transparency, and different proportions [thereof] in a determinately bounded body, truly and properly mixed, produce this color or that [color]. For color is, as it is said elsewhere, “the limit of the transparent in a determinately bounded body” [*Sense and Sensibilia*, 3.439b11-14]. Absolutely speaking, therefore, according to this [definition] there is no color in the body of the organ of sight, either extreme or intermediate, since it is not a determinately bounded body, properly speaking. And yet in the pupil itself, the two aforementioned causes of the colors persist in their commonality. They are not mixed together in some special proportion in dense matter, but are, in a certain purity of theirs, loosely united, and this is their commonality. And in some manner their immateriality and purity is called their midpoint. For this commonality can, in different matters and different compounds, generate diverse colors of every kind. I suppose it is evident why this common nature can be called a midpoint and how it is common.

Man of God, you will not in any way find that [this is the case] in the intellect — namely, that it can be called a midpoint of intelligibles. But neither does it have an organ. And therefore if you want to find some common understanding in accordance with which the soul should be called all things in some manner, you will have to go higher, perhaps transcending all such [considerations].

[Question 2:

In what manner a sensible and the sense,  
and an intelligible and the possible intellect, become one]

Before you ascend, however, you ask in what manner a sensible and the sense become one. Similarly, in what manner do the possible intellect and a received intelligible become one? For it is certain that if they become one in some way, they [become] one in number. But since we use [the phrase ‘numerically one’] in many ways, just like ‘numerically the same’, I ask: in what manner are these things made numerically one?

[What is the received sensible or species in the organ]

It is certain that the received sensible or species is some form. Therefore it is either a substance or an accident.<sup>10</sup>

If [the received species] were a substance, then (since each of the two, [species] and sense, would be a substance) if they were truly made one, [the result] would truly be one substance and one nature — an individual, namely, composed from matter and form. But that can be said neither in the case of the sense and a sensible, nor the intellect and an intelligible. Certainly not the case of the sense and a sensible, because sensibles are accidents,<sup>11</sup> and what is once an accident, and is in itself an accident, is never a substance. Nor [can it be said] in the case of the intellect and an intelligible, because substances and accidents are not understood differently;<sup>12</sup> hence, [the intellect] receives the species of both. And again, since so many varied and multifarious intelligible species of substances and accidents are received in one and the same possible intellect, it follows that none of them would be a substantial form, which together with the intellect would truly make one individual, one substance, [or] one person.

By no means would [the received species] be an accident, because it neither proceeds nor arises from the principles of its recipient. It therefore will not be its accident. Yet if it were the accident of another subject, it would never go out from and beyond that [subject]; for accidental being is inhering. Now, therefore, it seems that neither this [thing] received in the sense, nor that received in the intellect, is a substance or an accident, nor is it altogether nothing.

Here you yourself will respond, Man of God, noting at the outset what is substantial being and what is accidental being. The being of substance as such is multiple: for it may be the being of an external composite substance existing in itself, namely [in] external matter outside the intellect. Or it may be the being of the parts of the same substance, namely of the matter and form existing in the composite substance. Or it may be the being of the simplest nature existing in itself, neither [inhering] in matter nor based on matter, and this pertains only to the First Cause.<sup>13</sup> By contrast, accidental being exists in only one way, namely belonging and inhering in the manner of an impression and of material inherence in the subject from whose principles it originates and arises.

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<sup>10</sup>This follows from Aristotle's ontology, which was (and is) widely interpreted to divide all being into substance and accident. Rufus here expands upon that ontological picture by proposing a novel mode of being outside Aristotle's schema.

<sup>11</sup>To avoid being confused by this statement (which may appear inconsistent with Rufus' conclusion that a received species is neither a substance nor an accident), it is important to remember that Rufus is here talking about the sensible nature in an external object, *not* the abstracted species of the sensible. The former is an accident; the latter, Rufus will claim, is not.

<sup>12</sup>That is, sensibles and intelligibles are alike grasped by the intellect.

<sup>13</sup>I.e., God.

You might suggest, therefore, that a sensible in an external object has accidental being in the medium and the organ. [But] it has neither accidental nor substantial [being], because we distinguish being in yet another manner; namely, we distinguish between nature-being and species-being. And this distinction is very useful and necessary. Nature-being is twofold, as noted previously: substantial [nature-being] and accidental [nature-being]. Species-being will be evident when it is evident what I am calling a species. I call a species the most express similitude of the form which is in the object, and I say this in [reference to] sensibles and intelligibles alike. For the moment, however, we will characterize it in terms of sensibles.

Therefore you suggest that a species or similitude of a color received in the medium, organ and sense acquires a new [kind of] being — not accidental being, [but a mode of being that is] immaterial in a certain way — that is to say, comparatively [immaterial] with respect to the being it had before in the external, material, colored thing. Just as it loses that first being, so it also loses the name of that form and [of that] nature; and so also, as it loses the definition of the name, it acquires a more subtle being. For that reason, we should not call it color, because, as we said, it has lost the name and definition of color. It is, however, not so far removed as to transfer into the nature of another genus. But neither does [it move] into another species of the same genus, nor into some other individual of the same species. The identity of the similitude of whiteness to a given whiteness *A* is greater than the identity of some other whiteness *B* to whiteness *A*. It is not, however, absolute numerical identity. As a result, you can gather that the difference between the species of a sensible nature and the sensible form existing in the object is less than the difference between diverse individuals of one most specific species. [But] the difference is greater, or the identity lesser, than complete numerical identity — as, for example, Socrates' [relationship] to Socrates himself.

Suppose you ask, what is formally predicated of the species generated outside the object, since it is neither a substance nor an accident nor (as you would point out) nothing whatsoever? I say that by formal predication it is the species of a nature existing externally in the object, and this phrase, 'species or similitude', denotes its formal predication expressly enough. Hence the Philosopher names the species of color "quasi-color" [*On the Soul*, 2.7.418b9-12],<sup>14</sup> apparently because he could not assign anything more precise or more proper when naming it.

[Reply to the second question]

Because you ask, therefore, at the outset, 'In what manner will something one be made from these?' — you should know that it is numerically one, but not exactly in any of the customary modes.

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<sup>14</sup>"Quasi" here, and throughout, translates the Latin "*ut*."

You should understand that, commonly speaking, the modes in which something is called numerically one pertain to one product of different natures — made either from each of two substances, or from a substance and an accident, as from Socrates and white. Here, however, in the case under consideration, numerically one thing is made from the sense and the species of a sensible, [or] in like manner from the intellect and the species of an intelligible. Not from a nature and a nature, but from a nature and a species. And so this mode is very different from other modes, just as species-being is greatly different from nature-being. And therefore anyone who is ignorant of this difference in being will often fall into many errors and deceptive traps.

You say, therefore, that something numerically one is made from these, just as from a subject and a habit, not [a subject and] a substantial form, nor an accidental form, but a habit-form. For you ought to distinguish form three ways: form which is a substance, form which is an accident, and form which is a species and a habit. And you can distinguish the first two, taken together as one, from species- or habit-being.

I say therefore that the species of a sensible is a form, namely a habit, in the medium and the organ and the sense. And light, in the same manner, is also a form in the medium of air and the organ and sight, but not a form having nature-being — namely, substantial or accidental [being] — but species-being and the being of a habit-form. And I say ‘habit’ correctly; for it has an opposite privation, namely a possible obscurity in the same subject [Cf. *On the Soul*, 2.7.418b19].

Hence, as I suppose, it is evident to you that it is not, strictly speaking, [only] a property of an accident that it can ‘both inhere and not inhere in the same [thing]’ [*Topics*, 1.5.102b4-7]; or alternatively, that it can “be present and absent apart from the corruption of the subject.” For this is also a property of a habit-form and its opposite privation, which inhere in their recipient.

Concerning corporeal light — the light, I say, which is diffused outside its origin, namely [light] here in air — perhaps the Philosopher sufficiently agrees with the above. He says that light is “the presence of an intention of the lucid<sup>15</sup> in the transparent.” And you, converting this, speak as follows: ‘light is an intention of the lucid, present in the transparent’. And what is thereby said, except that light generated from its origin, namely by a luminous body, is received in external matter, namely in transparent air? This received [thing], I say, is the species and express similitude, not an illusory or imaginary similitude, but something verging as far as possible on identity, and approaching the form of the lucid at its origin, just as was said above concerning the species of color and the color itself.

You must look elsewhere, however, [for more on] what corporeal light is, and the doubts about it and its comparison to colors, which are barely mentioned

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<sup>15</sup>“The lucid” — “*lucidum*” in Latin — signifies something that has the quality of being lit up, brightly shining, or incandescent.



here. But keep in mind that what I said about sense and sensibles, etc., applies similarly in the case of the intellect and intelligibles. Always be mindful of the being of received intelligible species, and how something numerically one is made from the intelligible species and the receiving possible intellect. Also keep in mind the many other distinctions we touched upon previously, and most of all the difference in form and being between natures and species.

[That the species is a habit-form]

According to the aforesaid you may say that grace in a just soul is neither a substantial form (which makes a this-something<sup>16</sup> with matter), nor an accidental form, but rather is a habit-form that, [together] with the soul, comprises a single thing, just as the subject and the habit-form [comprise a single thing]. Note this well! Corporeal light in transparent air is in some manner a material example for you, as stated earlier.

[Question 3: What is predicated and how?]

Man of God, I am garrulous and loquacious, and I don't know how to be efficient. I have detained you with these things a long while, but let me now proceed to another [topic]. And I ask you, what is predicated and of what is it predicated?

[In what manner a nature-form is predicated of matter]

So these Philosophers sometimes say, as you know, that being (“*esse*”) is predicated of an entity. Elsewhere they also say that form is predicated of matter. But you marvel at the latter [notion], and ask: “How is form predicated of matter? Is matter form, so that everything is the same?” But they do indeed say, as I said, that being (“*esse*”) is predicated of an entity. Yet it is impossible for being (“*ens*”) to be predicated of an entity except by means of a preposition, namely as in an oblique [case]. What do you think about these things? [Do you think] that every predicate is naturally concrete and always names, informs, and qualifies the subject concretely, and there is altogether nothing mediate between the predicate and the subject?

Learn from this that because the quality of a common appellative name is a quality,<sup>17</sup> and [so] has the being and mode of that which is adjacent and inhering, [it follows that] although it is not an accident, it can be predicated properly of an aggregate defined thing and of an individual, and it qualifies, names, informs and illuminates the matter of each of these. Moreover, a proper name like ‘Socrates’, because it designates a substance only in the manner of subsistence and as a foundation, and thus designates an entity as entity and not its being, is by itself predicated of nothing except of itself, and this only

<sup>16</sup>“This-something” here translates the phrase “*hoc-aliquid*.”

<sup>17</sup>Appellation is similar in some respects to the modern concept of reference.

accidentally. Hence you see that ‘being’ and ‘it is’ are concrete; but ‘entity’ is abstract, and yet if ‘entity’ and ‘man’ are placed in the predicate [position], they are understood concretely. For example, if I said, ‘man is a man’, ‘entity is an entity’, [then] ‘man’ and ‘entity’ in the subject [position] would properly stand for the aggregate; in the predicate [position], [they stand] for the form and common quality for which the appellative name is imposed [by the users of the language]. Here I am speaking of quality in the manner of an inhering disposition and quality, related to the aggregate and its matter. For you should understand that the same nature of the form which, [combined] with matter, composes the aggregate, namely the definite thing, is also predicated of the aggregate defined thing and the individual.

But you say: is the part therefore predicated of the composite, or the part of a part, namely the form of the matter? Understand that the form also is a substance and it is the same [substance]. The principle of understanding and being is thought of in two ways, and has dual being.

In the first manner, [form considered] in itself absolutely and in abstraction, as an entity and a this-something and a nature and a substance, makes a composite [when combined] with another, namely matter. According to this mode [form] is in no way predicated of a composite or matter — just as, for example, we cannot say that man or flesh is a soul.

In the second manner the nature of a form receives concrete being and mode, a qualitative and adjacent and inhering and naming mode. [Form designated in this second manner] denotes matter by its name, and in this sense it is predicated of its matter.

Perhaps what I say moves you [to ask]: if the form is an intellect separable from all matter and dimension, in what way can it receive the second mode of being? Because this seems to be the mode of passions and impressions, which are situated forms divisible by accident through the division of the subject.

Understand therefore that all forms inform and name their matter (namely, in the aforesaid concrete mode), either in accordance with their essence or in accordance with their operation. [This is the case] whether they are substantial or accidental [forms], and [among] substantial [forms] whether they necessarily need to subsist in matter, or are designed and created to be in matter and truly perfecting matter. Thus, perhaps, in these material forms, the very substance of the form, accidentally undergoing partition and extension, receives the concrete, qualifying, naming mode, as is [the case] in corporeal substantial forms, [both] non-living ones and living ones (namely, the vegetative and sensitive souls). Yet in forms separable from extension, such as the rational soul, note that it names its proper matters at least with respect to their operations.

From the aforesaid, understand that [the proposition] ‘Socrates is a man’ [or] ‘a man is a man’ is the same as if I said ‘Socrates or the matter of Socrates is humanified’, [or] ‘a man or the matter of a man is humanified’. And the word

‘humanified’ seems proper, since by this word ‘humanified’, which is concrete, the form itself is understood in the concrete and qualifying mode. Understand all predications in a similar way: ‘a pearl is a stone’ means a pearl or the matter of a pearl is stonified. But this is not a word<sup>18</sup> in [common] use. So this defect [in language, namely failure to] impose<sup>19</sup> words concretely designating these forms that are substances, impedes us greatly.

From the few [words] imposed [for this purpose], however, we get a common rule for all [cases]. For example: ‘light’ and ‘it is light’ signify the same [thing]; ‘understanding’ and ‘it understands’ signify the same [thing]; ‘the log is colored’, ‘the log and the matter of the log are colored’; ‘man is an animal’ [means] not ‘man is a soul’,<sup>20</sup> but rather ‘the man and his matter are animated’. Light is in the air and illuminates, qualifies, and is predicated of it. Air is not, however, light (“*lux*”), but [rather] lucid (“*lucidus*”).<sup>21</sup> Observe the concrete mode. The case is similar [in regard to] what you asked at the outset: ‘is form predicated of matter?’ It is true [that form is predicated of matter], and [the predication is] properly and exquisitely devised. Matter is not, however, form, but is formed and is something formed.

Along with this, you also see that, when you consider whether natural gifts and gifts of grace are the same or different, you can understand that [gifts] of grace are predicated of natural [gifts], but only concretely. That is to say, grace itself, which makes natural goods in rational creatures [gifts] of grace, informs and is concretely predicated of the same [natural goods].

Does it not, therefore, seem to you that the truth which is one alone, and is God, by which all true things are said to be true, namely that truth itself which is God, as St. Augustine has proved, is predicated of all true things? And similarly Augustine has proved of justice that it is the same singular thing: [the justice] in virtue of which all just things are called just is God; and this [justice] is predicated concretely of all just creations. What kind-heartedness, what generosity! The Creator allows Himself to be predicated in some way, namely concretely and through some names signifying Him, namely designating [His] quality. But [while] such a name is predicated of the Creator himself, namely concretely *and* abstractly (because essentially), [it is] in fact [predicated] of created things only concretely — that is, through participation, and not essentially. For this being, which is being just [and] being true,

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<sup>18</sup>The word to which Rufus refers is “stonified” or “humanified.”

<sup>19</sup>Medievals recognized the conventional quality of language; the meaning of terms was established by acts of imposition in which speakers determined how terms should be used.

<sup>20</sup>The relevance of the phrase “man is a soul” to this discussion of animals and animation is more apparent if one keeps in mind that the Latin word for soul is “*anima*.”

<sup>21</sup>Rufus is distinguishing here between “light” as a noun (“*lux*”) and the adjective “*lucidus*,” which signifies that something is lit up or full of light. It is harder to make this distinction clear in English than in Latin, because the English word “light,” unlike the Latin “*lux*,” can be both a noun and an adjective. This is why we have chosen to translate “*lucidum*” as “lucid,” since it is unambiguously an adjective.

does not pertain to a created thing. And therefore nothing created is called just and true essentially and abstractly, but [only] through participation, and concretely.

Man of God, I think that you have heard enough, both in general and about the particulars, from what was said above: [you now know] that form is predicated of matter, and [you know] how. I am speaking of form, which is a nature and an object in matter existing outside the soul and the intellect.

[In what manner a species is predicated of matter]

Now I return to the form which is a species of an existing object. And [here] I speak generally of [the species-form], whether [it is] sensible or intelligible, and likewise about its new matter in which it has acquired new being by abstraction,<sup>22</sup> namely [abstraction] from the dense, corporeal, external object. Similarly and analogously, [the species-form] is predicated concretely of its more subtle matter — just as the object-form existing extrinsically in more dense matter is predicated. But this is a great impediment in the Latin language — that is to say, that names are not imposed to signify species by [their] being and according to species-being, as distinct from the being of an [external] object. And I say we do not have simple names, by which the species of the sensible and intelligible forms of things as objects are designated, either with respect to abstraction or concretion. Rather, we note them through a kind of circumlocution. And you know that that is a great impediment for us in discerning many truths. I say, however, that just as color is predicated of the corporeal, colored subject — and this is the force of predication [where we say] that the body is colorized, and is colored and [is] not color — so the species of color received in the medium or in sight is predicated of each matter<sup>23</sup> concretely, not abstractly.

Let us say, by circumlocution, ‘the transparency of air is quasi [ut] colorized’; you should understand this as if it were one word, ‘quasi-colorized’. So it is necessary for me to borrow [a usage], and thus I say that the transparency itself is ‘quasi-color’. For here we have [the word color] that designates the abstract nature of the species of color, which is thus not predicated of matter, nor of some color, but only of something that is a quasi-color — that is, of something designated by the species of color. The species of color is therefore predicated of sight, but concretely. And some one [thing], namely numerically one, is made from these,<sup>24</sup> just as [one thing is made] from light and air. Not as [one thing is made] from matter and a substantial form or accidental form, but rather from a habit-form.

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<sup>22</sup>See Question 2 above.

<sup>23</sup>That is, the matter of the medium or of the sense organ.

<sup>24</sup>That is, sight and the species of color.

[To the third question:  
That species are concretely predicated of sensibles]

Understand from this the manner in which sense is in some way sensibles, namely the manner according to which sensibles are in some way predicated of the senses. And what manner is this? It [is], of course, the manner in which the species of sensibles, which are ultimately and more truly sensible, are concretely and truly predicated of the senses themselves.

You should have a similar understanding in the case of the possible intellect and intelligible species — that is to say, that an intelligible species abstracted from an external object can be considered in two ways, abstractly and concretely, analogously to the nature, existing externally, from which it is extracted. For the nature existing outside has two modes; with respect to the first mode it is predicated of its external matter; with respect to the other mode, it is not. For example: an animal is being animated by, or is an animated [thing in virtue of], its soul. I do not say, therefore, that ‘man is a soul’, for this [is said] abstractly; I say, however, that [man] ‘is an animal’ and that [man] ‘is being animated’, and that [man] ‘is an animated [thing]’, for in all three of these [statements], the nature is predicated, but concretely. Similarly I do not say that man is humanity, but that [man] is being humanified and that [man] is a humanified [thing].

Analogously, therefore, you should understand that the species of the soul, or animality or humanity or stoniness and so on for other cases — the intelligible species, I say, namely [the species-form] abstracted from all position and corporeality — is predicated of the possible intellect concretely and truly. For example, you can say that the possible intellect, when it understands a stone, truly is quasi-stonified; when [it understands] a man, it truly is quasi-humanified. That is to say that it is truly perfected and formed, not by the form of man, but by the quasi-form of man. And here again you see how much harm befalls us, and how much of an impediment presents itself to us, on account of the aforesaid defect in [our] imposition of [appellative] words.

[Excursus in Assisi]<sup>25</sup>

You heard earlier in what way all intelligibles are understood of the Creator himself — that is, how He, who is generosity by definition, most generously allows that He himself be predicated of a rational creature by means of some terms [such as truth or justice]. [But] consider the case of intelligible, created

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<sup>25</sup>The following defective text (translated here) appears prior to the excursus in the manuscript: *So therefore an external intelligible nature, not pertaining either to substance or to accident, whose species are not made abstract [and therefore cannot] be received and understood, either separately or together, by reason comparing and contrasting, correlating, discerning, and distinguishing between them. [This is] just like [when] you see the lights of the diverse stars simultaneously in the same part of the medium, both with the same organ and finally with the same sense.* This text does not appear to belong here.

things — that is, all external intelligible objects, which of course cannot by themselves immediately touch or be received by the possible intellect. Indeed, I say, the species of such things, abstracted from all position and corporeality — [those species] which are further, more truly, and more principally intelligible — are truly [and] properly, albeit concretely, predicated of the possible intellect in which they are received, and which they inform. For the matter of this possible intellect — which<sup>26</sup> is not situated [but] is nevertheless designed [to be] suited to receive tangible species and forms — is in the same degree related to and suited for these species (namely the intelligible species so abstracted), I say in the same degree related to and proportional to these species, as external matter [is suited for] the nature-forms, and forms having the being of a nature, [which inform] it. And you know that I distinguish species-being from nature-being. And you also see how something [numerically] one is made from the possible intellect and a received intelligible species, just as was established often in the preceding [discussion].<sup>27</sup>

[Resumption of the reply]

From what I have said, I believe you can see [the answer to] what you asked at the outset — namely, ‘in what manner is sense potentially the same kind of thing as a sensible is actually’?<sup>28</sup> For it is [so in] this [manner]: that the sense and the sensitive organ are, before they act, potentially capable of being qualified, named, and formed through concrete predication by a sensible in act — that is, by a sensible species. For a sensible species made actual and abstracted is called an actual sensible, while the external form [is called] a potential sensible. Moreover, when the sense or the organ actually receives the species, [it is actually similar]. [This is] similar to a body that is able to receive corporeal light. Before it receives, it is potentially similar to a projecting corporeal light source and its projected light; after it receives light, however, it is lit and is made actually similar to light and the luminous body.

You should understand the case of the intellect and intelligibles entirely similarly. That is to say, [you should understand] that before it actually receives an intelligible species, the possible intellect is potentially the same kind of thing as an intelligible in act. That is, the intellect is potentially able to be named, informed, and qualified, illuminated by infused light, namely by an abstracted intelligible species, which is indeed called an intelligible in act. On the other hand, the external nature, from which this species itself is abstracted, is called the potential intelligible. And the aforesaid possible intellect, [in virtue of its capacity] to receive, is potentially similar [to this external nature]. However, when it has actually received [the species], it is

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<sup>26</sup>The referent of the “which” in this clause is, strictly speaking, the possible intellect itself, not just its matter. This is clear in the Latin but awkward to render in English.

<sup>27</sup>See Question 2 above.

<sup>28</sup>See Question 1, *First response of the Philosopher to the second objection*, above.

made actually similar both to the infused species and to the external [object] projecting [the species].

Note, however, that here it seems to me that the external object nature is not an infuser, namely it is not sufficiently potent in itself to generate its abstract species from itself and outside itself. But rather I say it is the object nature (genus, subject, source and matter) from which some intellect in act abstracts and by which [such intellect] distinguishes an actual intelligible being from a potential intelligible being. This [intellect in act] is some such intellect as the philosophers call the agent intellect, whether it be some power of the intellective soul, or some external intelligence (namely [either] something created or the First Cause), as various differing opinions [hold]. About how the rational soul understands itself or an angel, and how an angel [understands] an angel or a soul, look elsewhere at the treatment in other questions.<sup>29</sup>

[Question Four: What is intelligible?]

But what do you say, Man of God? Already you say the species of a sensible thing is abstracted and the species of an intelligible is similarly [abstracted], and you distinguish and differentiate each species from the nature of the external object with respect to being, name, and definition. But how do you distinguish this species from that, and through what, and how is a sensible not an intelligible? Rather it seems that it is indeed [intelligible], for every creature truly is intelligible, both by the First Intellect and by a created intellect. That is, [every creature is intelligible] unless there is a defect on the part of our intellect, on account of which it could not understand the first principles, which, as far as they themselves are concerned, are maximally intelligible. But because our intellect is defective, corruptible, and weighed down with the burden of a corruptible body, the [maximally intelligible] species themselves are understood less [than sensible species], just as the sun [is hardly visible] to the eye of a bat [*Metaphysics*, 2.1.993b9-12]. Isn't color, therefore, truly intelligible? Yes, indeed. Because it is truly definable, it is truly knowable, therefore, etc. And so on in the case of all the other sensibles.

Or will, therefore, every sensible be truly and absolutely intelligible? Indeed, universally every creature will be intelligible. Whether [it is] universal or particular, it will truly be intelligible and knowable, for all of its principles, whether common or proper, are truly and absolutely knowable and intelligible.

But on the contrary: sense is not the intellect, therefore a sensible is not an intelligible. So what do you want, Man of God? When will you stop? Or do you not see that an intelligible is spoken about in two ways? Namely, there is the primary, remote, external [intelligible]; [and there is] the ultimate,

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<sup>29</sup>The preceding sentence is not found in Q312 (E). It may have been a marginal note that the Assisi scribe (A) moved into the text. It may refer to Rufus, *Contra Averroem* I, as quoted below near the end of the treatise.

proximate and immediate [intelligible] touching the receiving intellect — the species, namely, abstracted from all location and corporeality, having become actually intelligible.

Similarly you distinguish, on the part of a sensible, [between] two kinds of ‘sensible’: the primary, remote, external sensible, and the ultimate, proximate sensible, namely the species. You should answer, therefore, that every sensible, whether primary or ultimate, is a primary, remote, and external intelligible. However, no sensible whatsoever, as such, is an ultimate intelligible, namely entering and immediately touching the intellect itself.

Do you want to know why this is, Man of God? [It is] because every sensible, whether primary or ultimate, is situated; and the sense itself [is] situated. For [it is] the act, perfection, and natural form of an organic body. An ultimate intelligible, however, is a form and a species abstracted from all location and corporeality. Hence it is more abstract than any abstraction of a sensible.

Therefore you should say that a sensible and an ultimate intelligible are distinguished as sense and intellect [are]. And [some] argue: sense is not intellect, therefore a sensible is not an intelligible. But [this is] not [the case for] the sensible and the primary intelligible. For this too, namely a primary intelligible, can be corporeal and situated.

The Philosopher says: every sensible is in a place. What does this mean except what you are hearing now, namely that every sensible is situated? That is, being in a place pertains to a sensible. I get this distinction, namely [between] primary and ultimate intelligibles and sensibles, from what is commonly established by the Philosopher in [cases of] acting and moving. Namely he speaks of the agent and the mover in two ways: the primary and the ultimate [agent and mover]. Hence you know that, universally, the ultimate mover and the first thing moved are together, and there is nothing between them [*Physics*, 7.2.243a3-6]. But between the primary mover and what is moved, whether primary or ultimate, there can be something intermediate.

[Question Five: Of the cause of the immortality of the soul]

You still do not allow me to pause, but rather, although you know that I am inadequate to the task, you want to extort something great from me: the cause of the immortality of the rational soul, on account of which it is not corruptible. For this is what you call its mortality here. You know very well that every creature is reducible to nothing, as far as it is concerned in itself, unless it is sustained and governed by the First Himself and the Word of His power, and favored by the Spirit. It entirely owes its being to [God’s] goodness and generosity; this [dependence] we do not call corruption or mortality, properly speaking. You also know that there is mortality of grace and there is mortality of nature. Mortality of grace is a privation, namely [a privation] of grace and morals and of good life; as I say in summary, mortality of grace is a privation



of graces. Mortality of nature, however, is subdivided: for it is either [the natural mortality] of the conjoint human,<sup>30</sup> [which] is the separation of the soul from the body, or the extinction of the soul in itself, namely of life in itself — of natural life, I say. That is to say, [the soul] might cease to be a spirit, [but] not, however, altogether go out of existence. That is, the light that was life in it would be extinguished, [but] there would remain, however, some original foundation into which it would be resolved.

You know, however, that the life of the soul is a first act — it is the first act of the soul, I say, not the second act, as the Philosopher distinguishes [*On the Soul*, 2.1.412a22-23]: first act and second, knowledge and reflecting — namely, habit and act (namely the usual operation). Thus, Man of God, you live [even when] sleeping [Cf. *On the Soul*, 2.5.417a9-12]. And according to the Philosopher, ‘In all apprehending beings, life is apprehension’ [*Nicomachean Ethics*, 9.9.1170a15-16] — I call ‘apprehension’ a first act, not necessarily a second. However, what is life in plants except animation or vivification — a habit, in fact, not a usual act? These are difficult [things] which [I have] gone through quickly here, Man of God, but I suppose it pleases you in this abridged form.

In addition, it won’t escape you that ‘corruptible’ is said in two ways: either *per se*, or *per accidens*. A corruptible *per se* [either] has an active or passive contrary, or [is] composed of contraries. Hot and cold [are corruptible *per se*] in the first way, [but] a mixture of the four [elements is corruptible *per se*] in the second way.<sup>31</sup>

However, a material form is said to be corruptible *per accidens*, necessarily requiring a subject and constituted in being through the subject, [and] is divisible *per accidens* through the division of the subject. [As] I said above, a corruptible *per se* has an active or passive contrary. I added this because not every contrary is corruptible. For every division of any univocal genus is by contraries — namely, essential divisive differentias. For as the Philosopher establishes [in Book] ten of the so-called First Philosophy, all difference is contrariety in forms. And you know that when he says ‘difference’, what he has in mind is the primary diversity of those [contraries] that first divide a univocal genus. And these contraries are, namely, the essential divisive differentiae. But they are not active or passive, and thus not corruptible.

From this you see that the rational soul cannot be corruptible *per se*. For it is not composed of contraries, but neither does it have an active or passive contrary, even though it is a form. For even though it is a distinct species and hence has its essential constitutive differentia divisive of its genus (and so it has another differentia contrary to it, co-dividing the same genus essentially), it does not, however, have an active or passive contrary. And so in sum, you

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<sup>30</sup>“Conjoint human” refers to the soul bound to a mortal body.

<sup>31</sup>That is, hot and cold have contraries (i.e., each other), whereas a mixture of elements is composed of contraries.

may gather from the aforesaid the reason why [the rational soul] itself is not corruptible *per se*. Concerning the first corruptibles made, you know that the First Goodness does not will, nor is it appropriate for the First Goodness, to return nature and entity and the good to pure nothingness. Nor can any creature [annihilate anything], since [a creature has only] finite power; [annihilation], however, pertains to infinite power.

Concerning the corruption which is called the mortality of grace, you know very well how things are related in such [cases]. However, you can gather from the aforesaid, concerning the corruption which is the extinction of light and life in [the soul], that although [the soul] has a contrary, it [does] not, however, [have] an active or passive [contrary]. It can, however, at least mentally, be resolved and reduced into its original constituents, that is, the genus or genera or subject matter of its genera. But because its essential differentia does not have an active or passive contrary, the corruption of its differentia — i.e., the reduction into the substance of its genus by [something] possibly persisting and remaining — does not necessitate the actual existence of some opposite species under the same genus, so that “the corruption of one is the generation of another.’ And therefore, although it is possible mentally to reduce its differentia into the substance of its genus, because that entity, namely an imperfect genus, is a diminished being, it cannot exist outside the mind except when joined to some species. And it does not follow from this reduction of differentia into its genus, as said above, that contrary opposite differentiae of the species actually exist. Therefore, I say, you can understand very clearly from these [things] the reason why this [rational soul] is not corruptible *per se*. Think over these things well.

But now you expect [me to address] the final [topic] that is so very necessary to this question, namely whether [the soul] is corruptible *per accidens*. You know from the aforesaid what [it means] for a form to be, or be said to be, corruptible *per accidens*.

You also know that the following argument of Averroës has great credibility among the moderns<sup>32</sup> — namely, that because the intellect receives all material forms, and “every receiver lacks what is received or to be received,” the intellect is none of these material forms. The rational soul is not a material form, therefore it is not divisible through the division of [its] subject, nor is it constituted in being by [its] subject. Or put differently, if it pleases [you], [the soul] “is neither a body nor a bodily power.” And I call ‘a bodily power’ that which you heard about before, namely [something] material and divisible, constituted in being by [its] subject. You know very well, however, that there

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<sup>32</sup>See for example, Philip the Chancellor, *Summa de bono* IV q.6, ed. N. Wicki, I: 269. John of La Rochelle cites Averroës’ words below at *Summa de anima* 2.4.113, ed. G. Bougerol, p. 272. On this subject see also Domingo Gundisalvo, *De immortalitate animae*, ed. G. Bülow in “Des Dominicus Gundissalinus Schrift von der Unsterblichkeit der Seele,” in *Beiträge zur Geschichte der Philosophie des Mittelalters* 2.3 (1897): 1-38.

are two kinds of objections to this argument.

First: because just as the intellect receives all material forms, so it also receives all immaterial [forms], and much more properly as it seems; and every recipient is denuded of what it receives. Therefore according to the aforesaid argument: just as [the intellect] is not a material form, thus neither is it an immaterial [form], therefore it is no form at all.

Second: speaking *per se*, the intellect receives no material form as such, insofar as [it has] material being. On the contrary, [the intellect receives material forms] insofar as [their] being is abstracted from matter and from material being. Hence speaking *per se* it does not receive a material form as such, because that is proper to prime matter. On the contrary, it receives intelligible species — spiritual ideas as such. So how [can it receive] material species? Or [can it do so] only *per accidens*?

I do not know whether it pleases you to go through things in this way. For you have already seen enough above [to know that] an intelligible in act is an abstractible abstracted from every position and corporeality and beyond all abstraction of sensible being, so that an intelligible in act is altogether not situated. But any sensible, whether it be remote or ultimate, abstracted in its own way, is altogether situated and is in no way removed from position. We can argue, as it were, from these principles that the intellect is an unsituated form. From this conclusion, let God lead you to this, namely that the intellect is not a material form.

Just the same, Man of God, you say [that] because it is not situated, therefore it is not materially divisible, namely by division of the subject. Therefore it is not corruptible *per accidens*. What you have just been offered was all you had in mind in the question [originally] proposed. For [this proof of the soul's immortality] is firm, solid and appropriate. Moreover, if you accept that which you heard above about that famous argument, embrace it. If, however, [you do] not, you will [still] be able to say — as you have just heard — that [the intellect] entirely does not receive material [forms] as such.

But how do you feel, however, about the other case? For since [the rational soul] itself is an immaterial form, it cannot as such receive all immaterial [forms], since every receiver lacks the received, and it can never lack itself. Understand therefore that what [the rational soul] is in itself is an immaterial, unsituated nature-form. But it receives species-forms, not nature-forms. You have already heard enough to distinguish between them.<sup>33</sup> (And unless you make this distinction, you will often fall into error.) Whether therefore it understands itself or an angel or corporeal natures, it receives nothing except abstracted species-forms, and not nature-forms. Hence it is an immaterial form — it is true — namely, a nature-form. It receives, moreover, all immaterial forms — that is [also] true — [but] species-forms, not natures. Note what you can conclude, therefore: it is true that [the soul] is not [one] of these immaterial

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<sup>33</sup>See Question 2 above.

forms, namely species. But for [more detail on] how [the soul] understands and receives its own species, [which species is] also abstracted from [the soul] itself, look elsewhere, namely in the aforementioned Sixteen Questions.<sup>34</sup> There you will find a suitable example, namely a corporeal mirror: an image of a corporeal mirror can be represented [and reflected] in the [very] same corporeal mirror, and not just once, but many times and again.

You see, therefore, how these species-forms received in the intellect, although they are called immaterial [forms], are yet more material than the soul or the angel from which they are abstracted. For they cannot exist in themselves, according to this abstracted being, but necessarily require matter appropriate to them, in which they can be received, namely non-situational [matter]. These abstracted species, however, when they are abstracted from corporeal natures, are less material and more spiritual than the natures from which they are abstracted. In some way, however, both the former and the latter, just as you have heard, are material [forms] and require only non-situational matter.

Man of God, the peace of God [be] between you and me. And in peace let me be still and [let there be] silence for you — whether in perpetuity, I do not know. Nonetheless, pray for me unceasingly.

[Colophon]:

Here ends *The Mirror of the Soul*, discovered theologically  
and best understood according to the sense of Aristotle,  
in which all we Christians, faithful to Christ,  
should assent, and by no means resist, etc.

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<sup>34</sup>Cf. Rufus, *Contra Averroem* I, cod. Erfurt Q.312, fol. 83vb, here translated: “Now I humbly beg: teach me how the created intellect understands itself by reception. Can it be that it receives itself? If not, what does it receive? Won’t it have an idea, since it is a nature and a created entity? It is well pleasing to you that the intellect should understand itself by its true idea and exemplar-form in you, the true mirror. But do you also permit the intellect, by its own nature, to express its proper idea in its own mirror? For the intellect is a nature or created entity, and so it can be an object from which an image is cast forth, and so it is likewise a mirror. Hence it is receptive of an image or idea, and yet it is not receptive of an abstract idea except by the nature of its spiritual matter...And wouldn’t it be a corresponding example among corporeal things if the image of a certain corporeal mirror were received in some other corporeal mirror, and thence reflected back into the first mirror? And thus the same mirror would be seen [in itself] by virtue of its own image, received in itself by that very mirror. Then wouldn’t the image and the thing whose image it is be together, and again the object generating the image and the mirror receiving the image would be the same thing?”